

RAP vehicles proven to save lives in Iraq. We voted to give our troops a pay raise that the President called "unnecessary." We strengthened military health care with the Wounded Warriors Act to clean up the inadequate care of wounded soldiers at Walter Reed and other facilities. And the Democratic House voted to provide the largest increase in funding for VA health care in the history of this country.

Mr. Speaker, these investments that support our veterans and troops overseas are just a few examples of how our Democratic Congress is taking America in a new direction.

ENERGY POLICY FOR THE FUTURE

(Mr. BOUSTANY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, a new cellulosic ethanol plant recently began production in my district, which will use high-energy sugar cane to yield ethanol. It is yet another reminder of the importance of domestic energy production not only for southwest Louisiana but for our entire Nation.

But we must recognize that we have a strategic dependence on fossil fuels and foreign oil. The farm bill currently working its way through Congress should not pick winners or losers but encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. It is a critical piece to our national energy plan with renewable agri-based energy solutions.

Home-grown energy as a part of our national energy strategy reduces our dependence on foreign energy supplies, helps the environment, and will promote our rural communities and keep them strong.

This Democratic Congress has failed to produce a viable energy policy. I challenge the Democratic leadership to work with us in Congress to produce such a viable energy policy.

NOW IT'S CHOLERA

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, let me talk about a surge in Iraq the President is not talking about. An outbreak of cholera is spreading across the country, harming and killing innocent Iraqi people. Five hundred new cases were confirmed in Kirkuk in the last 5 days.

The World Health Organization says there have only been 12 deaths so far, but there are 3,000 confirmed cases and 30,000 more Iraqis are sick. As a medical doctor, let me tell you that cholera is caused by human waste contaminating the water supply. In other words, the sewage treatment plants that we were supposed to rebuild that worked prewar are still not working after the surge. And innocent Iraqis are suffering.

When a Seattle church group sent me to visit Iraq in 2002, they asked me to

see firsthand how Iraqi children were suffering from the effects of the first war in 1990, the subsequent economic sanctions and how their suffering would only get worse in a new war. They were right.

Cholera is the latest example of a failed war. Instead of talking about the surge, the President should be talking about the scourge of cholera.

HIGH-TECH BOUNTY HUNTING

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, high-tech bounty hunting is now occurring in the United States. The Internet allows law enforcement to track down known sex offenders in the United States. States can find convicted sex offenders that must register under the new Adam Walsh Child Safety Act. Failure of a child molester to register is a Federal crime.

So these convicted sex offenders who do not register with local authorities are now being arrested using LexisNexis Internet tracking.

Florida police were hunting for a known sex offender. They traced him to Illinois, but Illinois officials claimed the offender was dead. The Internet search tools tracked the child molester to Indiana, where he was arrested for absconding and for failure to register as a known sex offender.

Studies show that convicted sex offenders often remain dangerous and become recidivists once released from prison. Sex offenders are now being held accountable for failing to register; law enforcement is informed of known sex offenders' whereabouts; future recidivism is prevented; and, meanwhile, children are safer because of high-tech bounty hunting.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1030

IT'S TIME TO HOLD DEFENSE CONTRACTORS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, there are as many private contractors in Iraq as U.S. soldiers on the ground. Outsourcing our military should be a cause for concern for all Americans, but the recent uncovering of indiscriminate hostility toward Iraqi civilians and unprovoked killings by security contractors in Iraq is a siren warning that demands immediate attention.

Blackwater, a company that has reaped over \$110 million from the taxpayers since 2006 in U.S. contracts, offers one of the most egregious examples of what is wrong with our occupation of Iraq.

Last week, Blackwater security protecting State Department officials

opened fire in a Baghdad neighborhood, and in what appears to be an unprovoked incident, Blackwater guards killed at least 11 innocent Iraqi civilians and wounded 12 others. But because of a decree delivered in 2004 by our Ambassador Paul Bremer on his last day on the job, these contractors are granted immunity from Iraqi law and will likely face no charges at home.

This lack of accountability is anathema to our fundamental principle of equal justice under the law and exemplifies why the occupation of Iraq has been such a failure.

BIPARTISAN COOPERATION ON IRAQ IS THE BEST WAY FORWARD

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House, we took a great first step forward, I think, in finding bipartisan common ground on the way forward in Iraq with the passage of H.R. 3087.

The issue of our troop presence in Iraq has caused great debate across our country; it has polarized this Congress and our Nation. I believe this first step is a demonstration that a bipartisan way forward can happen. In fact, it must happen for the good of our Nation and our ultimate success in Iraq. We can draw that day closer if we in this Congress and we in America continue to work together to forge consensus instead of resorting to partisan attacks.

The report of General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker last month has given us reason for hope that progress is being made and our troops can begin returning home. As our troops so bravely continue their mission, let us continue ours and build upon the momentum that we started yesterday in this House. Let us all hope that the day is coming soon when our troops, who have protected our Nation and exported liberty, freedom and democracy, will come home. We owe them nothing less than our best effort to make this hope a reality.

PRESIDENT'S VETO THREAT OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE BILL

(Mr. CLAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday this Congress sent the President bipartisan legislation to reauthorize and strengthen the Children's Health Insurance Program. This bill will provide 10 million low-income children with health care coverage, including 4 million uninsured children who are currently eligible for the program but not yet covered. Unfortunately, President Bush just vetoed this bipartisan legislation.

The President's opposition to this bill puts him squarely in the minority.